



February 22, 2021

Dear Representatives Melanie Stansbury and Angelica Rubio, House Speaker Brian Egolf, Senate President Pro Tem Mimi Stewart, and Senators Benny Shendo and Carrie Hamblen:

Western Leaders Network applauds your step towards bold climate action and is writing today in strong support of the New Mexico Climate Solutions Act (HB9). Thank you for sponsoring this critical legislation to develop a just and sustainable economic future for all New Mexicans that will create high-quality jobs and protect our climate by ensuring the state, alongside historically marginalized communities, chart a path toward a net-zero carbon future.

Western Leaders Network was founded in 2017 as a nonpartisan nonprofit to organize local and tribal elected officials throughout the Interior West to amplify their voices and take action at the local, state and national levels to protect our air, waters, public health and public lands. Our organization includes more than 450 local and tribal leaders throughout Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming.

As local and tribal elected officials, we are deeply aware of the connections between our physical environment, the health of the people we represent, and the economic resilience of our communities.

The Climate Solutions Act provides guidance on how to achieve a just transition and seeks to diversify our economy and strengthen its climate resilience. Communities from across the state will be able to help develop the transition to a clean energy economy.

By enshrining science-based emissions targets in statute, directing the New Mexico Environment Department to ensure regulations are in place to meet those reductions, codifying the Governor's cabinet-level climate leadership council, and prioritizing emission reductions in the state's most impacted communities while creating high-quality jobs in the process, this bill will ensure that New Mexico's efforts on climate change are durable and lasting. The Climate Solutions Act also puts the state in a strong position to combat the climate crisis and help ensure that all New Mexicans enjoy the public health and economic benefits they deserve.

The impacts of climate change and lack of revenue diversification facing New Mexico – recurring boom and bust economic cycles, record-breaking temperatures, devastating forest fires and severe drought – are already compromising the health and overall stability of our communities and our environment and show just how urgently we must act. And as we move towards a brighter and healthier future, we must ensure that all New Mexicans are able to be part of the solution.

Thank you for safeguarding the health and economic well-being of New Mexicans today and for decades to come.

Sincerely,

Lan Sena, Albuquerque City Councilor
Victor Snover, Mayor, City of Aztec
Rosalyn Fry, Aztec City Commissioner
Mark Lewis, Aztec City Commissioner
Harry Browne, Grant County Commissioner
Alicia Edwards, Grant County Commissioner
Johana Bencomo, Las Cruces City Councilor
Yvonne Magdalena Flores, Las Cruces City Councilor
Gill Sorg, Las Cruces City Councilor
Gabe Vasquez, Las Cruces City Councilor
Chili Yazzie, Navajo Nation Shiprock Chapter President
GloJean Todacheene, San Juan County Commissioner
Anna Hansen, Santa Fe County Commissioner
Hank Hughes, Santa Fe County Commissioner
Alan Webber, Mayor, City of Santa Fe
Kasandra Gandara, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Santa Fe
Jamie Cassatt-Sanchez, Santa Fe City Councilor
Carol Romero-Wirth, Santa Fe City Councilor
Renee Villarreal, Santa Fe City Councilor
Nathaniel Evans, Taos Town Councilor
Brian Colón, State Auditor